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COO4.
detecting a *Helicobacter pylori* nucleic acid present in a patient stool sample; and
identifying the patient as having a current *Helicobacter pylori* infection if the
nucleic acid is present in a length and an amount indicative of infection, the amount
exceeding an amount indicative of an absence of current *Helicobacter pylori* infection.

~~11.~~
18. (Twice Amended) A method for detecting a *Helicobacter pylori* infection in a patient,
the method comprising the steps of:

detecting a human nucleic acid in a patient stool sample comprising shed cells or
cellular debris; and

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identifying the patient as having disease if the length of the nucleic acid is
indicative of infection.

~~12.~~
19. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the length is a length of 175

nucleotides.

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~~13.~~
20. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the amount indicative of infection is a
detection threshold.

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Please add the following new claim 24:

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~~14.~~
24. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of exposing the patient stool sample
to an immobilized probe that hybridizes to *Helicobacter pylori* nucleic acids, thereby to
immobilize a *Helicobacter pylori* nucleic acid, if present in the patient sample.